

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

1. (Currently amended) Table olives characterized in that they contain probiotic ~~lactobacilli and/or bifidobacteria~~ *Lactobacillus paracasei* adhering on the pericarp in an amount of  $1 \times 10^6$  or higher per gram of olive.
2. (Cancel) Olives according to claim 1 characterized in that the lactobacilli are selected from *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* and *L. paracasei* and the bifidobacteria are selected from *Bifidobacterium bifidum* and *B. longum*.
3. (Cancel) Table olives according to claim 2 characterized in that the lactobacilli are selected from: *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG ATCC53103; *L. rhamnosus* IMPC 11; *L. rhamnosus* IMPC 19; *Lactobacillus paracasei* LMG P-22043; *Lactobacillus paracasei* IMPC 4.1 and that the bifidobacteria are selected from *Bifidobacterium bifidum* ATCC15696 and *Bifidobacterium longum* ATCC15708.
4. (Withdrawn) Table olives according to claim 3 characterized in that the lactobacilli belong to the strain *Lactobacillus paracasei* deposited with the Belgian Coordinated Collections of Microorganisms under accession number LMG P-22043.
5. (Currently amended) Probiotic food products comprising the table olives of any one of ~~claims 1-4~~ claim 1.
6. (Withdrawn) Use of lactobacilli and bifidobacteria to coat the pericarp of table olives.
7. (Withdrawn) *Lactobacillus paracasei* deposited with the Belgian Coordinated Collections of Microorganisms under accession number LMG P-22043.
8. (New) Table olives according to claim 1 characterized in that they contain probiotic *Lactobacillus paracasei* adhering on the pericarp in amounts sufficient of table olives to increase at least one logarithmic cycle the intestinal population of the probiotic bacteria population upon ingestion and colonization of the gastrointestinal tract.